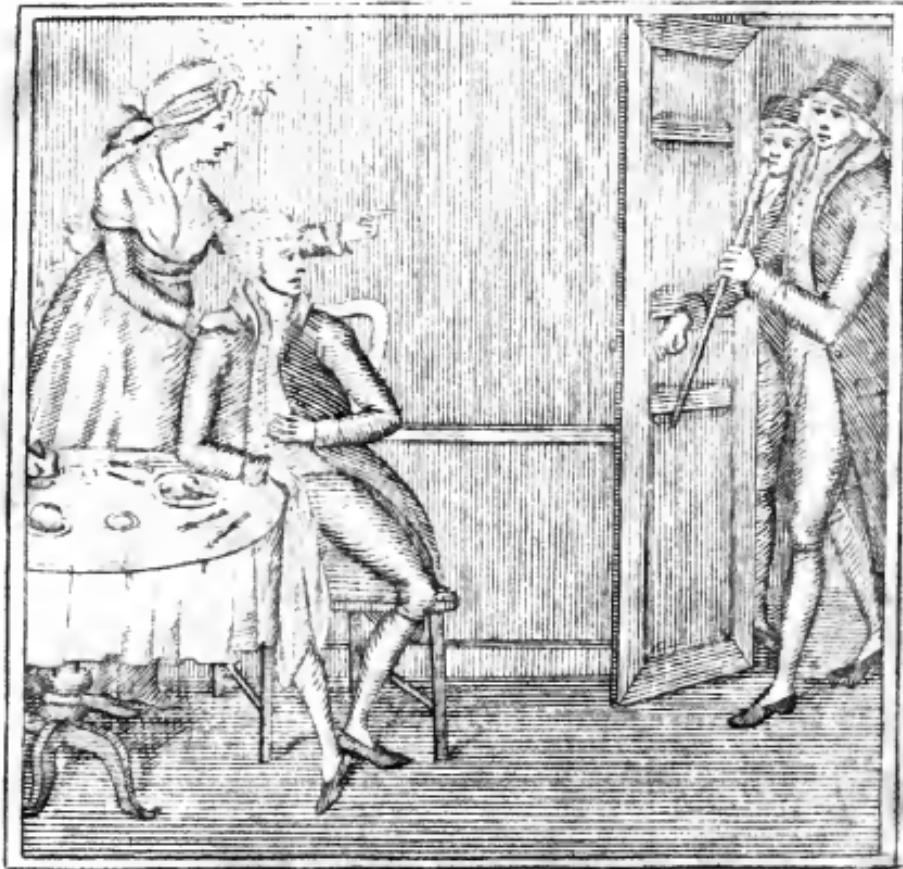




CHILDREN'S BOOK
COLLECTION

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LOS ANGELES

The
Cheapside
A P P R E N T I C E.



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THE

CHEAPSIDE APPRENTICE ;
OR THE
HISTORY OF MR. FRANCIS H****.

Fully setting forth the Danger of playing with
EDGE TOOLS.

ATTEND, ye young men, who are about to enter into trade, for to you I write my story. I was bound apprentice to a respectable tradesman in Cheapside. My master, Mr. Vincent, had acquired a very fair character, whilst he was making a comfortable fortune. His wife was a dressy, flashy woman, who liked visiting and jaunting, more than taking care of her family; whilst my master was plodding late at night in the compting-house, Mrs. Vincent and her daughters were either making parties abroad, or giving entertainments at home. As we kept no footman, I was allowed,

when shop was shut, to run from one public place to another to call a coach to bring Mrs. Vincent and her daughters home. To lounging about the purlieus of a play-house I owe my ruin. I was generally allowed to be a handsome, well-made young man ; this unfortunately drew upon me the notice of a set of those wretched women, who nightly crowd our theatres, and the avenués to them. I should have been delighted with the notice they took of me, had not my vanity whispered me that Miss Vincent was in love with me. This suspicion was fully confirmed to me by one Potter, an elder apprentice, but for whose wicked advice, I might have lived happily, and died virtuously.

The idea that Miss Vincent was in love with me, at once sat me up for a coxcomb ; I now neglected my business, and to adorn my person be-

came the only object of my thoughts ; I began to commit little frauds on my master, in order to obtain money to dress out ; for, ever since Potter had laughed me out of my religion, every principle of moral honesty sat loosely upon me.

I am sorry to say, the holy sabbath in our family was only distinguished from other days by the shutting of the shop ; my master spent the morning of it in posting his books ; and my mistress and her daughters were either dressing to go abroad, or else to receive company at home. We young men, indeed, were sent to church, but as we had no examples set by the heads of the family going thither themselves, Potter and I generally hired a gig, and dashed away from one tea-drinking place to another ; these scenes soon made me lose all respect for virtue and religion. It was

at the Dog and Duck I first saw the infamous Miss West; she was many years older than myself, but her person was as lovely as her heart was wicked. She was no sooner informed that I was to come into possession of 3000l. the day I came of age, than she made use of all her deceitful arts to ensnare both my soul and body; and she often prompted me to defraud my master to supply her extravagance. My attachment to Miss Vincent was now on the decline, for Miss West had so far wrought upon my vanity as to make me believe that so handsome a young fellow as I was, should look higher than a tradesman's daughter. From that moment I treated Miss Vincent with the most marked neglect, although I saw my conduct cut her to the heart; yet at the same time was I base enough to borrow

money of her, which I wantonly squandered on Miss West.

When Potter's apprenticeship expired, instead of improving his fortune by throwing it into trade, he plunged at once into all the vices of the town. He possessed a plausible kind of prate, which caused him to be appointed chairman to our club, which was chiefly composed of clerks and apprentice boys. Potter's principal excellency consisted in singing a merry song, telling an indecent story, and teaching his hearers to laugh at morality, and set all religion at defiance; for religion, he maintained, was only an old woman's tale, invented by cunning heads to keep children and fools in order.

There was an honest old porter lived in our family, who for some time had set himself to watch my conduct, and at length he made such a

faithful report of it to my master, that he gave up my indentures, and turned me out of doors. I was too much delighted with my liberty, to feel the least sense of shame at the means by which I obtained it.

I was sorry, however, to break off entirely with Miss Vincent, for I still had a lurking affection for her; I told Potter so; his inventive genius soon laid a plan, whereby I might get her into my power, and take a complete revenge on her whole family at the same time. This was by writing her a letter, setting forth the violence of my love, the unmerited disgrace I had received from her family, and at the same time requesting her to grant me a private meeting, in order that I might justify my conduct to her, as otherwise I feared the violence of my passion would drive me to a fit of despair.

This poor imprudent girl met me at the time and place appointed. I will not here shock my readers with relating the vile stratagems I made use of to complete the ruin of this young lady, nor the tremendous oaths I swore to repair her wrongs by marriage, as soon as I came of age, which would be in a very few months ; this somewhat abated her sorrow for the very indiscreet step she had taken.

The day I became of age I went down into the country. My friends, having been apprized of my profligate life, received me very coldly ; I practised the deepest hypocrisy on my good mother, to make her believe I was quite a reformed man, in order to wheedle her out of sum of money, telling her, at the same time that I had an immediate prospect of entering into a very profitable concern with a

partner of great responsibility, if I could but increase my capital.

'Frank,' said she, with firmness, 'there is no trusting to your promises; as long as your conduct deserved my love, you ever found me an indulgent mother; but you shall never have cause to say that I acted towards you like a weak woman, by robbing my virtuous children to supply the wanton extravagance of a profligate son. Your wicked life, Frank, has nearly broken my heart. but it shall not shake my justice.' The well-known steadiness of my mother's temper convinced me at once she was not further to be imposed upon by the fallacy of my arguments.

As soon as I had settled my business, I returned to London to Miss Vincent, who had waited for me with the utmost impatience, fully expecting I was come to fulfil my promise of

marriage to her. ‘ I can struggle with want, dear Frank,’ said she, ‘ but I will never consent to live in shame.’

Nothing, I am certain, hardens the heart like vice ; for although this poor young creature was brought into a very trying situation by the prospect of her soon becoming a mother, I had the cruelty to swear I would never make *her* my *wife*, who had disgraced herself by living with me as a *mistress*. On hearing this, in all the agonies of grief ,she urged me to repair the wrongs I had done her, reminding me, at the same time, of the wicked arts I had made use of to beguile her of her innocence, and then, with clasped hands and streaming eyes, she threw herself on her knees before me, beseeching me to pity the agonies which rent her soul ; yet still my hardened nature was untouched by

her sorrow, again I solemnly swore I never would marry her.

Through excess of grief she fainted away, in which pitiable state I left her to the care of a servant, went out, and spent the rest of the evening with Miss West, whose flinty heart turned into ridicule the sorrowful tale I related to her. On returning to my lodgings the next morning, I was informed that Miss Vincent had left them without leaving behind her the least information where she was to be found; and much did I rejoice when I heard it, that she had taken herself off so quietly.

I now lavished my money as though it would never have an end. By all our set I was esteemed the most noble spirited fellow in the world, and even little wits would be silent in my presence, because I was sure to pay for the wine upon which they were to

riot. My cash at length beginning to run low, as I had been all along drawing from the principal, I advised with Potter how to get furnished with future supplies. He advised the gaming table as a never-failing friend, saying, it had long since been the only resource from whence he derived his subsistence.

I took his advice, and for some months was so successful, that I began to dash away in higher life at the west end of the town. I bought an elegant phaeton which I drove every Sunday in Hyde Park, with Miss West by my side. One day, as I was driving furiously through Temple Bar, I had the misfortune to overturn a poor man with a heavy load on his back; on his getting up I perceived him to be Mr. Vincent's old porter, to whom I formerly owed my disgrace.

‘ Ah ! ah ! what, is it you young hopeful?’ cry’d he, on seeing to whom he owed his misfortune ; ‘ well, he must needs go whom the devil drives ; thy prancing nags may die a natural death, master Frank, but verily I think ’tis more than thou wilt, boy ; for if thou do’st not die in thy shoes, the gallows will be robbed of its due. What is become of poor Patty Vincent, thou profligate dog ; hast thou broken her heart, as thou hast thou hast that of her poor afflicted parents ?’

The sudden recollection of that unfortunate girl caused such a swimming in my head, that the reins dropped from my hands, my horses took fright, and it was almost a miracle that I got home alive. The porter’s words had made such an impression on my mind, that I could not shake them off. Soon after Potter calling upon me, I told him my interview

with the old porter, and also the effect it had on me. ‘Frank,’ said he, ‘if a fellow of thy spirit can be thus easily overcome by qualms of conscience, let us instantly adjourn to the tavern, since good wine is the best remedy in the world to drown all uneasy recollections in.’ I gladly accepted his proposal, we called a coach, and off we went. He no sooner saw my spirits inflamed with wine than he drew me to the gaming table, where, before morning, I lost every shilling I had in the world; I applied to Potter to lend me fifty guineas, as he had won more than two hundred of me.

Laughing heartily, he told me, ‘it had ever been a maxim with him, never to lend his money to a man who had not prudence to keep his own; but, harkee, Frank,’ said he, ‘I’ll give thee my best advice gratis; such a noble spirited young fellow as thou

art, needs never be at a loss for money, whilst he can snap a trigger, and the highway is left open for him to practise upon. Men who follow the same course of pleasure, are the last people in the world to help each other in the hour of distress ; virtuous men, Frank, alone feel for the wants of their friends, and they alone find pleasure in relieving them.' He then whistled himself off.

When I got home, I sat revolving in my mind how get myself out of my present difficulties, when, in a fatal moment, Satan whispered in my ears the word FORGERY. At first I started at the thought, but my poverty was clamorous ; my pride startled at disgrace, although my conscience did not shudder at the crime. I knew I could copy Mr. Vincent's hand exactly, I snatched up the pen to draw a bill upon him for 500l. but a cold shivering

seizing me, it dropped from my fingers, a strong sense of my guilt now overtook me, I tore what I had written to pieces, and exclaimed, ‘I am a free man again;’ and for a moment felt thankful that I had been enabled to resist the violence of temptation. I sat pondering, however, how I should maintain myself; again I was assaulted with the dread of poverty, and again I snatched up the pen, drew the fatal bill, and instantly went out and got it discounted.

But the moment I sought to take rest at night on my pillow, I felt as if all the horrors of hell had seized me. I jumped out of bed in my sleep, and was going to throw myself out of the window, having dreamed that I was apprehended; the people of the house, awakened by my cries, ran into the room, concluding some villains

had broken in, and were going to murder me.

I never afterwards went into the street, but my fears told me that I was the subject of conversation of all the people I met. Once I happened to hear one man say to another, pointing to third, ‘that’s he, that’s he ;’ I took to my heels, concluding that I myself was meant, and ran from one street to another without knowing whither, till my sight failed me, and, through loss of breath, I dropped down in a fit. Some humane people, however, recovered me, and put me into a hackney coach, which carried me home.

One day, a sudden gust of wind blew open my chamber door ; again I concluded the officers were coming to take me. Snatching up the poker to defend myself, I swore I would not be taken alive ; when turning about suddenly, I caught a glimpse of myself

in the glass, my eyes looked wild, my lips quivered, my jaws dropped, my teeth chattered, and my body shook, as though the last agonies of death were upon me. On finding I was once more become the dupe of my fears, my spirits rallied again, I dressed and went to the play ; there I met Sally West, whom I had not seen for some weeks ; for to say the truth, I dreaded to meet an old acquaintance from the time I committed the forgery ; after the play, we went off together to sup at a tavern ; we had not been there a quarter of an hour when she made an excuse for quitting the room ; in about ten minutes she returned to me, expressing, in the tenderest tremors, the satisfaction she had to see me again.

We were, as I believed, just going to sit down to supper, when the waiters came in followed by two of Sir

John Fielding's men. Immediately, with the greatest coolness, Miss West arose, and laying her hand on my shoulder, exclaimed, "the Philistines be upon the Sampson." 'Gentlemen,' continued she to the officers, 'this is my good friend, Mr. Francis H*****, of whom you have been some time in search. Perhaps, Frank,' continued she, 'you do not know that your forgery is discovered, and that 100l. reward is offered for taking you; when I left the room just now, it was to write a note to these gentlemen, signifying to them where you were to be found; I see you are terrified, but hear me for the last time, perhaps, and you will the less wonder at my conduct. Early in life, Frank, I was betrayed to ruin, by a base designing man; my reputation once blasted, I was deserted by all the virtuous part of my own sex; by having bad ex-

amples always before my eyes, I soon became hardened in sin and abandoned to shame. I have lately contracted debts; if they are not immediately discharged I shall be sent to a jail; this jail I know not how to avoid, but by sending you thither in my stead, as the reward offered for taking *you* will just set *me* free from my creditors.'

I was struck motionless with terror, and fainted away on the officers approaching to tie my hands behind me; nor had I the least recollection of what passed, till I found myself safe locked in my prison. About a week after this, the keeper came to tell me, there was a prisoner lately brought in who was very desirous of seeing me; and as she appeared an object of great pity, he offered to conduct me to her. On entering the chamber, I saw a young woman very shabbily dressed,

lying on a miserable bed, in a very weak condition.

‘Dost thou not know me, Frank?’ said she in a hollow broken voice, ‘Hast thou lost all recollection of Patty Vincent?’ I felt instantly as if struck with a thunderbolt. ‘Merciful Heaven!’ cried I, falling on my knees by the bed-side, ‘I am unable to bear the punishment my crimes have brought upon me! O God of mercy support my troubled soul!’ She kindly urged me to be comforted, said she wished not to see me to reproach me for the evils I had brought upon her, but only to tell me with her last breath that she forgave me. ‘It is not an hour since, Frank,’ continued she, ‘that I heard you were my fellow-prisoner; and what is worse, at my father’s suit. I will not reproach you, Frank, I tell you again, for all the miseries you have brought upon

me, because you are a prisoner, and in chains. If my breath will hold out, I will endeavour to give you a short history of myself since we parted. On your refusing to make me your lawful wife, I quitted your lodgings, resolving, by my labour, to eat the bread of industry rather than follow a course of vice for a wretched subsistence. I hired a garret in Holborn, where I applied for needle-work, and soon obtained it. In about three months after our separation, my infant came into the world ; I sold my clothes for my support during my confinement, but that resource soon failed me. My health and strength declined, I was seized with a constant fever and cough, and quite unable to supply the scanty morsel of bread for the day, yet resolved to die rather than afflict my dear parents with the knowledge of my misery.

At length, being too weak to labour, I contracted several small debts, for which I was seized and brought hither; I have, however, since been prevailed upon to send my poor half-famished baby to my parents, hoping they will afford her that bread which her dying mother dared not ask for herself.' Observing I was speechless with agony, poor Patty went on. 'I did not wish to see you, Frank, to afflict you, I wish only to warn you, with my dying breath, to repent of the evil of your ways, and humble your soul before God. Repentance for sin, Frank, though bitter for the moment, yet I have found healthful to the soul; and however the wicked, who are at ease, may deride the God who made them, yet the sighing and the sorrowing heart will flee unto him as the only present help in the time of trouble: I shall very soon lay down

my heavy burden of sickness and sorrow, and escape from a darksome prison, as I humbly trust, to everlasting rest. O Frank! Frank! it is far safer to die a penitent in a jail, than to live in a palace, with a heart untouched by God's grace.'

Here she was interrupted by the unexpected entrance of Mr. and Mrs. Vincent. O ye who shall hereafter read my story, drop a tear of pity at the agony I now endured! They no sooner beheld their chlid, than each by turns tenderly embraced her, assured her of their forgiveness, and gently chid her for having concealed herself so long, adding, that as a penitent child they would most gladly have received her, though they would have shunned her, if they found her living in prosperous wickedness. She thanked them, and said,

Mourn not my death, my dearest parents, but rather rejoice that I die penitent for my transgression; and since I have received your blessing and forgiveness, I have but one favour more to ask in life, which is, that you, my kind father, will extend your pity towards that young man, pointing to me, ‘O save him, if possible from an ignominious death; and remember, that *my* child is also *his*. My business in life is done; and now, O heavenly Father! receive my spirit, and pardon my sin, through Jesus Christ my Redeemer.’ Here her speech failed her; and, after a few convulsive struggles, she expired.

Great Heaven! is there any punishment for me to suffer hereafter beyond what I endured at the moment? A dead silence succeeded for some time, my groans only were heard. As

soon as Mr. Vincent had somewhat recovered the shock, he raised himself from the body of his child, and spoke to me as follows:

'Behold, O young man, the calamities which thy crimes have brought upon my family! Behold my departed child lying on the bosom of her fainting mother; yet I am not insensible to the agonies which rend thy soul, and sorry am I to add to them, by telling thee, that thy excellent mother lost her senses, on hearing thou hadst committed a crime, by which thou hadst forfeited thy life to the laws of thy country. O Frank! Frank! what deep distress can one profligate child bring on whole families! Thy crimes, alas! have brought on thy own destruction; for I fear it will not be in my power to befriend thee on thy trial, much as I am disposed to do it in consideration of thy rela-

tions. Too late, Frank, thou must now see how fatal an excessive love of pleasure must prove to a young tradesman. Thy wretched conduct has opened my eyes on the errors of my own practice; and I now abhor myself in dust and ashes. Honest industry is generally a sure road to wealth, as a sober religious life is to happiness. To thy cost thou must already have experienced that the wicked can have no dependance upon each other, since thou art betrayed, and brought to shame, by those very friends who first led thy youth astray.'

'O Sir,' cried I, 'few and evil have been my days, but the great God above, who knoweth the secret of all hearts, can alone judge of the sorrows of mine; it is not, Sir, the punishment of death which I fear, but the just vengeance of offended Heaven which must follow it; for though a very

young man, I am a very old sinner. Alas! my dear and honoured mother, is it then true that the crimes of your own child have robbed you of your senses? and yet the merciful hand of God has hitherto withheld his vengeance from striking me dead. To whom shall I fly for mercy and pity in my distress? from the law I cannot expect it; and from offended Majesty of high heaven I dare not hope it, since my present punishment is but the certain wages of my sin.' Here, I am told, I fell into strong convulsive fits; and in that condition was conveyed to my cell.

Written the night before my execution.

It is a month since I was put on my trial; and my guilt being fully proved by the court, I am condemned to hang by the neck till I am DEAD! DEAD! DEAD!

O ye thoughtless young men, who have forsaken the God of heaven to follow after the enticing pleasures of this world, attend to my words, as to those of a man speaking to you from the grave, since the dawn of that day is now breaking on the world, in which I shall be numbered with the dead. Although, at the instant I write, I am in all the prime of youth, and all the vigour of health, yet I shall this day die a just victim to the broken laws; and my precious soul may be consigned over to everlasting torments, unless the great Judge of all things will be graciously pleased to accept my sorrow for my sin, through a gracious Redeemer.

My days are numbered, my hours are few, and the solemn tolling bell will soon be summoning me to meet my God in judgment. The convul-

sive struggles of death are already upon me before I reach the gallows, whereon I must shortly hang a as warning spectacle to gaping thousands, and from whence I must shoot the great gulph which parts.

TIME from ETERNITY!

O, blessed Lord, have mercy on my soul !

The above story was found in the young man's pocket after his execution.

THE HYMN.

FATHER of light, O cleanse my stains,
Look on a sinner vile ;
In dungeon dark, oppress'd with chains,
Deign thou on me to smile.

Condemn'd to die by human laws,
I own my sentence just,
With mercy mild judge thou my cause,
Who art my only trust.

Tho' great my crime and short my race,
My FAITH and HOPE receive ;
Since souls enrich'd with pard'ning grace,
With thee shall ever live.

Then farewell all beneath the skies,
The sting of death is o'er ;
O may my trembling spirit rise,
Where sin shall be no more.

DAN AND JANE;

OR

FAITH AND WORKS.

A TALE.

GOOD Dan and Jane were man and wife,
And liv'd a loving kind of life,
One point, however, they disputed,
And each by turns his mate confuted.
'Twas faith and works—this knotty question
They found not easy of digestion.
While Dan for faith alone contended,
Jane equally good works defended.
' They are not Christians sure but Turks,
Who build on faith and scoff at works.' "

Quoth Jane—While eager Dan reply'd,
 ' By none but heathens faith's deny'd.'
 ' I'll tell you wife,' at length quoth Dan,
 ' A story of a right good man.
 A patriarch sage, of ancient days,
 A man of faith whom all must praise:
 In his own country he possess'd
 Whate'er can make a wise man blest ;
 His was the flock, the field, the spring.
 In short a little rural king.
 Yet, pleas'd he quits his native land,
 By faith in the Divine command :
 God bade him go, and he, content,
 Went forth, not knowing where he went.
 He trusted in the promise made,
 And, undisputing strait obeyed.
 The heavenly word he did not doubt,
 But proved his faith by going out.'

Jane answer'd with some little pride—

I've an example on my side ;

And tho' my tale Le somewhat longer,
 I trust you'll find it vastly stronger,
 I'll tell you, Daniel, of a man,
 The holiest since the world began,
 Who now God's favour is receiving,
 For prompt *obeying*, not *believing*.
 One only son this man possest,
 In whom his righteous age was blest ;
 And more to mark the grace of Heaven,
 This son by miracle was given ;
 And from this child the word Divine
 Had promis'd an illustrious line.
 When lo ! at once a voice he hears,
 Which sounds like thunder in his ears ;
 God says—Go sacrifice thy son !
 —This moment, Lord, it shall be done.
 He goes, and instantly prepares
 To slay this child of many prayers.
 Now here you see the grand expedience,
 Of *works* of actual sound *obedience*.

This was not *faith*, but act and deed,
The Lord commands—the child shall bleed.
Thus Abraham *acted*,' Jenny cried ;
‘ Thus Abraham *trusted*,’ Dan replied.
‘ Abraham?’ quoth Jane, ‘ why that’s my
man,’
‘ No, Abraham’s him I mean,’ says Dan,
‘ He stands a monument of *faith*;’—
‘ No ’tis for *works*, the Scripture saith.’
‘ ’Tis for his faith I defend him :’
‘ Tis for obedience I commend him.’
Thus he—thus she—both warmly feel,
And lose their temper in their zeal ;
Too quick each other’s choice to blame,
They did not see each meant the same.
‘ At length, good wife,’ quoth honest Dan,
‘ We’re talking of the self-same man.
The works you praise I own indeed,
Grow from that faith for which I plead ;

'Tis not enough of faith to *talk*,
A man of God, with God must walk :
Our doctrines are at last the same,
They only differ in the name.
The faith I fight for is the root,
The works you value are the fruit.
How shall you know my creed sincere,
Unless in works my faith appear ?
How shall I know a tree's alive.
Unless I see it bear and thrive ?
Your works not growing on my root,
Wou'd prove they were not genuine fruit.
And Abraham, whom for faith I quote,
For works deserves especial note :
If faith produce no works, I see,
That faith's not a living tree.
Thus faith and works together grow,
No separate life they e'er can know :

They're soul and body, hand and heart,
What God hath join, let no one part."

